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Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Transmission Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

Financing of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of Secretary-General on the revised budget for the maintenance of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) for the current 12-month period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 (A/53/789). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with the representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. As indicated in paragraph 1 of the report of Secretary-General, in its resolution 52/246 of 26 June 1998, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $17,704,685 gross ($16,959,085 net) for the maintenance of MIPONUH for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999, inclusive of the amount of $894,085 for the support account for peacekeeping operations. The appropriation provided for the maintenance of the Mission from 1 July to 30 November 1998 in the amount of $11,349,085 gross ($10,848,685 net) and for its liquidation in the amount of $6,355,600 gross ($6,110,400 net). Including budgeted voluntary contributions totalling $1,714,200, the total budget for the maintenance of MIPONUH amounted to $19,418,885 gross ($18,673,285 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

3. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1212 (1998) of 25 November 1998, by which the Security Council extended the mandate of MIPONUH until 30 November 1999, the report of the Secretary-General contains the revised budget for the maintenance of MIPONUH for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999. The report includes proposals for additional requirements amounting to $12,290,015 gross ($11,603,615 net), exclusive of additional budgeted voluntary contributions in kind totalling $1,714,200 (see A/53/789, para. 5). Thus, the total revised budget for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 amounts to $33,423,100 gross ($31,991,100 net), including budgeted voluntary contributions in kind totalling $3,428,400. During the current period, the Mission will maintain its current strength of 300 civilian police monitors, to be supported by 74 international staff, 133 local staff and 17 United Nations Volunteers. The civilian police force of 300 includes a special police formed unit consisting of a 90-person rapid reaction unit deployed along with its own 50-person support group (see A/53/789, para. 7 and S/1998/1064, para. 8). The cost of this unit is being reimbursed in accordance with standard reimbursement rates for formed units. It is the first civilian police unit designated as a formed unit in peacekeeping operations.

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4. The Advisory Committee welcomes the efforts made by the Secretariat to improve the revised budget report. The Advisory Committee notes that an attempt has been made to refrain from resubmitting the entire budget and that the presentation focused mainly on the additional requirements of the revised budget, thus producing a shorter report. Nevertheless, in the view of the Advisory Committee, there may be a need for further simplification of some redundant narratives. For example, paragraph 9 of the report states what is obvious from the tables and the annexes. In future presentations, such narratives could be omitted from the report.

5. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 10 of the report that additional requirements for MIPONUH result mainly from the extension of the mandate of the Mission to 30 November 1999. The request includes non-recurrent items in the amount of $2,596,700 that were not previously budgeted, as the Mission was expected to end on 30 November 1998 in accordance with Security Council resolution 1141 (1997) of 28 November 1997. As shown in annex II.B of the report, the bulk of requirements for non-recurrent items are for transportation operations ($1,246,500) for the purchase of 87 vehicles and workshop equipment. Provisions for non-recurrent items also include estimates for the replacement of communications and data-processing equipment that is not year 2000 compliant.

6. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 12 of the report that the request for purchase of vehicles is based on the fact that the Mission "has been operating with vehicles and equipment that are long past their commercially useful life. Their continued operation and use could adversely affect the operation of the Mission". Taking into account the pattern of expenditure of the Mission and to permit timely acquisition of vehicles and equipment, the Advisory Committee concurred in the request for commitment authority in the amount of $3 million, pending consideration of the revised budget by the General Assembly. A copy of the letter from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee addressed to the Secretary-General is attached to the present report (see annex).

7. As indicated in paragraph 2 of annex II.C to the report, provision under military contingents includes the amount of $291,500 for reimbursement of a claim for travel under a letter of assist, in respect of a contingent of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH) that rotated in October 1996; no funds had been reserved in the UNSMIH accounts for that period to cover the cost of the travel. The Advisory Committee requested clarification on the matter and was informed that in October 1996 a contingent serving with UNSMIH was rotated. However, at that time the Government concerned was advised that the United Nations would not reimburse it for the rotation flights because only three months would have elapsed since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1063 (1996) of 28 June 1996. There were also concerns related to the possibility of a second repatriation a few weeks later if the UNSMIH mission terminated on 30 November 1996. With the adoption of Security Council resolution 1086 (1996) of 5 December 1996, the UNSMIH mandate was extended until July 1997. The incoming contingent from the October 1996 rotation completed their six months of duty in Haiti, and accordingly reimbursement should be made to the contributing Government.

8. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 4 of annex II.C to the report that the increase in the provision for civilian police results from planned deployment totalling 3,594 person-months in the revised budget of MIPONUH, as compared to 1,800 person-months in the original budget. Other increases affecting the estimates for civilian police include changes in the cost of rations from a daily rate of $9.00 to $10.50 owing to a change in contractor and an increase in the cost of bottled water from 38 cents to 60 cents. The Advisory Committee sought further clarification as to the reasons for the increase in daily rate rations and bottled water. It was informed that the rations contract providing services before the MIPONUH mandate covered the period from June 1995 to April 1998. With the establishment of MIPONUH in December 1997, new bids were sought for the provision of rations to the special police unit. There were only two bidders for the envisaged contract, and the vendor chosen (ESKO) provided the lower price. Moreover, the lower number of persons to feed/service, as compared to the troops that were previously present, resulted in higher costs per person.

9. As shown in annex I to the report, international and local staff costs increased from $6.3 million to $10.2 million. Professional staff salaries have been adjusted to take into account non-entitlement to post adjustment for 28 per cent of the staff in the Professional category who are classified as mission appointees. The Advisory Committee notes that local staff salary costs increased from $723,300 initially apportioned in the current period to $1,765,700 in the revised budget for the current period, or about 144 per cent, and by 84.6 per cent as compared to the local salary expenditure of $956,400 reported for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998. Upon inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the increase in local salary costs resulted from a new salary survey conducted by the Office of Human Resources Management. Comparators retained for the local salary survey for the General Service

category conducted in Port-au-Prince in June 1998 were a commercial bank, two embassies and two oil companies.

10. Other travel costs shown in annex I under civilian personnel costs increased from an apportionment of $32,200 in the initial budget to an estimate of $97,400 in the revised proposal for the current period. As indicated in paragraph 6 of annex II.C, the revised estimate includes $17,500 spent during the period from 1 July to 30 November 1998 and estimates for round-trip travel between New York and the mission area ($26,000), travel within the mission area ($14,000), travel and daily subsistence allowance of seven staff from New York for the implementation of the Field Assets Control System ($31,600), travel and accommodation expenses for two air safety officers ($2,700) and travel and subsistence expenses for internal auditors ($5,600). The Advisory Committee is concerned about the apparent excessive increase in travel between Headquarters and the mission area for which it did not receive satisfactory explanation. In the view of the Advisory Committee, travel requirements for the period from January to June 1999 should be reviewed so as to ensure strict control and bearing in mind travel that is likely to be required in the future.

11. The total revised requirements for premises/accommodations amount to $1,445,300, reflecting an increase of $729,200 or 98.2 per cent over the initial apportionment. These include an additional provision of $530,000 for the renovation of eight police stations used by MIPONUH civilian police. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 5 of annex II.D to the report of the Secretary-General dated 9 April 1998 (A/52/869) that the amount of $200,000 was requested for the period from 1 January to 30 June 1998 for the renovation of 10 police stations. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was informed that, for the period ending 30 June 1998, based on the bidding exercise by the Mission, only 4 of the 10 police stations were renovated for $200,000 ($50,000 each).

12. Revised provisions for rental of vehicles amount to $616,400, as compared to $232,600 in the initial apportionment, or an increase of $383,800. The Advisory Committee notes that expenditure for rental of vehicles amounted to $209,600 for the period from 1 July to 30 November 1998, or $41,920 per month, while for the period from 1 December 1998 to 30 June 1999, the estimate for rental of vehicles amounts to $406,800, or $58,114 per month. Upon inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the period from 1 July to 30 November only covered the rental of seven vehicles ($33,277 per month), self-sustainment ($1,925 per month) and maintenance support ($6,720 per month). There were no training courses during the period. The period from 1 December 1998 to 30 June 1999 included the above costs per month plus the two training courses (December 1998 and June 1999) and the additional $60,000 for the shortfall of the 1997/98 period.

13. Annex V to the report (A/53/789) contains a functional breakdown of requirements of individual contractors. The Advisory Committee notes that some of these contractual personnel perform functions, such as stores, inventory and procurement functions, that should normally be performed by mission staff. The Advisory Committee recommends that a review be made to ascertain the extent to which such functions could be assigned to mission staff.

14. Taking into account its comments in paragraph 10 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the appropriation and assessment of the amount of $12,264,015 gross ($11,577,615 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999, in addition to the amount of $17,704,085 gross ($16,959,085 net) already appropriated and assessed under General Assembly resolution 52/246.

Annex

Letter dated 9 February 1999 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Controller's letter of 29 January 1999 requesting the concurrence of the Advisory Committee to enter into additional commitments up to the amount of $4,791,340 gross ($4,462,940 net) for the maintenance of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 31 March 1999. This request is made pursuant to the terms of section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994, since the Assembly is not expected to take action on the revised budget before March 1999.

The Advisory Committee notes from the Controller's letter that the total revised budget for MIPONUH for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 amounts to $29,994,700 gross ($28,562,700 net), including $894,100 already approved for the support account for peacekeeping operations and the absorption of $143,200 for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and excluding voluntary contributions in kind amounting to $3,428,400.

The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 52/246 of 26 June 1998, appropriated the amount of $17,704,685 gross ($16,959,085 net) for the maintenance of MIPONUH for the current 12-month period of 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999, inclusive of the amount of $894,085 for the support account for peacekeeping operations. The additional requirements for the maintenance of MIPONUH for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 would therefore amount to $12,290,015 gross ($11,603,615 net), exclusive of budgetary voluntary contributions in kind totalling $1,714,200.

The Advisory Committee further notes that monthly expenditures of MIPONUH are estimated by the Controller to amount approximately to $2,499,558 gross ($2,380,225 net) and that the additional requirements of the Mission for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 include the amount of $2,596,700 for non-recurrent items, such as communications and data-processing equipment, which had not been previously provided for, as the Mission was expected to be terminated.

Taking into account the amount of $17,704,685 gross ($16,959,085 net) already appropriated by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/246 for MIPONUH for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999, the pattern of expenditures of the Mission as provided by the Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division in his memorandum of 3 February 1999, the additional requirements for non-recurrent items and the need for timely acquisition of forward purchase items, the Advisory Committee authorizes you to enter into additional commitments in the amount of $3,000,000 in accordance with terms of the General Assembly resolution 49/233 A.

(*Signed*) C. S. M. **Mselle**
Chairman